


**NEWARK
PUBLIC
INFORMATION
OFFICE**



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Sharpe James, Mayor
Pamela E. Goldstein, Director

MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable Sharpe James, Mayor

From: Donna Purnell, Assistant Communication Manager 

Cc: Pamela E. Goldstein, Communication Manager

Date: June 1, 2000

Subject: Critique of CBS News *American Dream* segment w/Councilman Cory Booker

Sir, this 5-minute segment airs on CBS National News, evenings at 6:55 P.M. this week's profile featured Cory Booker. The following is my perspective of last night's program:

PROGRAM CONTENT:

Spotlight on Cory Booker as Newark's newest and most promising politician. The format contained Cory walking through the streets—very personable with residents—while voice-over narrated some of his feats, i.e. staging hunger strike; living in the tent; the motor home; and ridding the neighborhood of drugs.

PERCEPTION:

Negative. Newark was not portrayed as a City on the move making tangible strides toward its former greatness. Quite the opposite was implied. Cory Booker positions himself as the sole influence on recreating Newark as "a shining city on the hill." Thus implying he **alone** is responsible for making his neighborhood a safer, drug-free place to live. That is of course, as he sees it, his hunger strike "shamed the city into action."

Additionally, the piece, showing Booker stroll through his "new" neighborhood – the Central Ward – gave the impression that Cory is well known throughout the city. Anyone watching – not from Newark – would believe it. However, those who live here know the real deal.

OVERALL IMPRESSION

This piece was a profile on a political "personality" in the making, and did more to enhance Booker's image than the City's. Last night's program gave the impression that Newark has not progressed at all. And anyone unfamiliar with Newark's magnificent turnaround didn't hear anything about it last night. This program gave Booker national exposure and he used it to his advantage. I strongly suggest we get out in front of this and use this medium to our advantage. After all, you are the First African American Senator/ Mayor! Where I come from that's NEWS!

Note: Videotape and program transcript attached.